

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 VIENNA 08090 01 OF 02 011655Z

46

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEA-10 IO-15 SR-02 ORM-03 VOE-00 SCA-01

SAJ-01 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15

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UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 VIENNA 8090

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SUBJECT: PRESS REACTION TO TERRORIST ATTACK

1. THE KREISKY GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO CLOSE DOWN THE SCHOENAU TRANSIT CAMP FOR SOVIET JEWS IN ROUTE FOR ISRAEL RECEIVED MIXED AUSTRIAN EDITORIAL REACION. AMONG INDEPENDENT PAPERS NEGATIVE VOICES GENERALLY PREDOMINATE WHILE SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST PAPERS SUPPORT THE DECISION. SO FAR, THERE IS ONLY LITTE COMMENT ON THE PROTESTS OF SENATORS JACKSON AND HUMPHREY AND AMERICAN JEWISH GROUPS.

2. IN ORDER TO PRESENT A WIDE SPECTRUM OF OPINONS, INDEPENDENT KURIER ON SUNDAY (SEPT. 30) CARRIED FOUR EDITORIALS WRITTEN BY DIFFERENT MEMBERS OF ITS STAFF. CHIEF EDITOR HUBERT FEICHTLBAUER CRITICIZED AUSTRIA'S COMPLIANCE WITH THE ARAB TERRORISTS' DEMANDS: "TERRORISTS WILL COME BACK IF THEY KNOW THAT THEY CAN GET WHAT THEY WANT. TODAY THEY HAVE ACHIEVED A BAN ON GROUP TRANSIT TRAVEL. TOMORROW THEY WILL DEMAND THAT AUSTRIA PROHIBIT INDIVIDUAL TRANSIT TRIPS OF PERSONS THEY DISLIKE.... TODAY IT IS STILL UNDERGROUND TERRORISTS WHO LOSE THE SENSE OF PROPORTIONS. TOMORROW, A WHOLE GOVERNMENT CAN ACT THAT WAY. MAHMOUD KHALDI (ONE OF THE TWO TERRORISTS WHO STAGED THE COUP) WAS CALLED ADOLF HITLER IN 1938."

3. ANOTHER KURIER EDITORIAL WRITER MAINTAINED: "KREISY SAID THAT
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PAGE 02 VIENNA 08090 01 OF 02 011655Z

DEATH IS SOMETHING IRREVERSIBLE. HOWEVER, A PROMISE MADE TO POLIT-

ICAL EXTREMISTS IS NOT IRREVERSIBLE. IT BOGGLES THE MIND THAT AUSTRIA, WHOSE HUMANITARIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD SOVIET JEWS CONTRIBUTED MUCH TO HER INTERNATIONAL PRESIGE, SUDDENTLY ABANDONS THIS POLICY UNDER THE PRESSURE OF TWO TERRORISTS. THERE MUST BY WAYS AND MEANS TO KEEP THE PLEDGE AND NEVERTHELESS BREAK IT."

4. A THIRD KURIER COMMENTATOR: "WAS THIS DECISION REALLY NECESSARY?WE WERE THE ONES WHO YIELDED, NOT THE TERRORISTS."

5. THE FOURTH KURIER EDITORIAL WRITER CALLED IT MOST IMPORTANT THAT THE HOSTAGES ARE ALIVE. HE ADDED: "THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT HAS NOT SACRIFICED ANY BASIC (HUMAN) RIGHT. NO CONVENTION HAS BEEN VIOLATED, NOT EVEN IN THE SPIRIT. SOVIET JEWS CAN CONTINUE TO PASS THROUGH AUSTRIA IN ANY DIRECTION OR, FI THEY LIKE,SETTLER HERE. THE ONLY CONDITION: THEY MUST DO THIS PRIVATELY (THAT IS, NOT AS GROUPS.)"

6. TODAY'S (MONDAY'S) KURIER RAN A BANNERLINE, "WORLD CONDEMNS VIENNA SETTLEMENT TO SAVE HOSTAGES", BUT THE PAPER EDITORIALY DEPLORED ISRAELI PRESS CHARGES THAT AUSTRIA TREASURES THE NAZI HERITAGE.

7. IN AN EDITORIAL ENTITLED "IRREPARABLE DAMAGE", PRESTIGIOUS INDEPENDENT DIE PRESSE (OCT. 1) WAS OUTSPOKEN: "FOR THE FIRST TIME, A GOVERNMENT HAS PROMISED TO ARAB TERRORISTS TO REVISE ITS POLICY AND HAS THUS SACRIFICED PART OF ITS SOVEREIGNTY ... TOMORROW, OTHER TERRORISTS WILL COME, TAKE HOSTAGES AND DECLARE THAT THEY DISLIKE (AUSTRIA'S) NEUTRALITY. SO LET US JOIN A BLOC ... THE REPUB- LIC OF AUSTRIA HELPED THE ARABS' INTERNATIONAL TERROR WIN ITS GREATEST POLITICAL SUCCESS THUS FAR."

8. THE RULING SOCIALIST PARTY'S CENTRAL ORGAN, ARBEITER-ZEITUNG, VINDICATED THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION (SEPT. 30): "CLOSING DOWN THE SCHOENAU TRANSIT CAMP IS IN THE INTEREST NOT ONLY OF AUSTRIAN SECURITY, BUT ALSO THE SECURITY OF THE JEWS ... THE RIGHT OF TRANSIT (THROUGH AUSTRIA) HAS NOT BEEN CURTAILED BASICALLY, BUT THE IMPLEMENTATION WILL BE REVISED ... GIVING PRIORITY TO SAVING FOUR HUMAN LIVES WAS THE EXPRESSION OF A POLICY FOR WHICH MAN HIMSELF COUNTS FOREMOST."

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 VIENNA 08090 01 OF 02 011655Z

9. THE INDEPENDENT MASS-CIRCULATION TABLOID KRONEN-ZEITUNG ON SUNDAY CARRIED TWO EDITORIALS. THE FIRST ONE SAID: "SAVING (THE HOSTAGES') LIVES WAS THE PROBLEM NUMBER ONE. IT WAS SOLVED. THE REST WILL BE SETTLED TOO. NO MATTER WHAT OTHER DECISIONS HAD BEEN MADE, OUR COUNTRY WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SPARED REPROACHES."

10. THE OTHER KRONEN-ZEITUNG EDOTORIAL: "THE AUSTRIAN SOLUTION SAVING THE LIVES OF THE HOSTAGES AT SCHWECHAT (AIRPORT) WAS EXEMPLARY.

DESPITE THE CABINET'S CONTROVERSIAL DECISION (TO CLOSE DOWN THE TRANSIT CAMP), IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO FIND AN AUSTRIAN SOLUTION ALSO IN THE SCHOENAU ISSUE. WE ARE MORALLY OBLIGED TO LOOK FOR IT."

11. ON MONDAY, KRONEN-ZEITUNG CONTENDED: "IF THE WORLD'S REACTION HAD NOT BEEN SO LOUD, WAYS AND MEANS WOULD CERTAINLY HAVE BEEN FOUND TO TREAT THE JEWS EMIGRATING FROM THE SOVIET UNION VIRTUALLY JUST AS WE HAVE TREATED THEM SO FAR. NOW, HOWEVER, VIENNA WILL HAVE TO SHOW ITS TRUE COLORS. WE OUGHT TO PONDER THE FOREIGN COMMENTATORS' DOUBT AS TO WHETHER THE CABINET'S DECISION IS REALLY BINDING FOR THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT ... THE SCHWECHAT DRAMA ENDED WITHOUT BLOODSHED, AND CREDIT FOR THIS IS DUE TO KREISKY. BUT HE WILL HAVE TO CONTINUE TO BE AS RESOURCEFUL NOW THAT AUSTRIA'S PRESTIGE IN THE WORLD IS AT STAKE."

12. SEMI-OFFICIAL WIENER ZEITUNG (SEPT. 30): "OFFICIAL AUSTRIA WILL ABIDE BY THE ARRANGEMENTS MADE. GROUPS OF SOVIET EMIGRANTS PASSING THROUGH (AUSTRIA) WILL NO LONGER ENJOY THE PRIVILEGES THEY HAVE ENJOYED UP TO NOW, AND THE SCHOENAU TRANSIT CAMP WILL BE DISBANDED. IT WILL NOW BE UP TO PRIVATE AID ORGANIZATIONS TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE SUBSTITUTES FOR THIS."

13. PEOPLE'S PARTY VOLKSBLATT (OCT. 1): "WE WONDER IF IT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE TO SAVE (THE HOSTAGES') LIVES ALSO WITHOUT PAYING THE HIGH PRICE ... WE ALSO ASK, AND WAIT FOR AN ANSWER, IF OTHER HUMAN LIVES - PERHAPS HUNDREDS OF THEM - HAVE NOT BEEN RISKED NOW THAT THE ARAB TERRORISTS ENCOURAGED BY THEIR VICTORY AT SCHWECHAT WILL TRY TO WIN FURTHER SUCCESSES ... AUSTRIAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS ARE IN MORE OF A SHAMBLES THAN AT ANY TIME SINCE 1945."

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PAGE 01 VIENNA 08090 02 OF 02 011736Z

46

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 VIENNA 8090

14. COMMUNIST VOLKSTIMME (SEPT. 30): "THE OFFICIAL VERSION HAD IT THAT SCHONAU CASTLE WAS A TRANSIT CAMP FOR JEWS FROM SOCIALIST COUNTRIES EN ROUTE FOR ISRAEL AS EMIGRANTS. IN REALITY, HOWEVER, SCHOENAU WAS A RALLYING-POINT FOR ISRAELI SPIES WHO ENJOYED MANY PRIVILEGES. ... (SCHOENAU) OUGHT TO HAVE BEEN DISBANDED LONG AGO. THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT IS TO BLAME FOR THIS NOT HAVING HAPPENED EARLIER."

15. TURNING TO THE PROVINCIAL PRESS, THE GRAZ PEOPLE'S PARTY SUEDEOST TAGESPOST (SEPT. 30) WROTE: "THE FIRST COUP STAGED IN AUSTRIA BY THE PALESTINIAN UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT WAS UNDOUBTEDLY A GREAT SUCCESS AROUSING MUCH ATTENTION IN THE WORLD. IT WAS WON BY ARMED TERROR AND BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S YIELDING TO THIS EXTORTION. DR. KREISKY WILL HAVE TO ANSWER MANY QUESTIONS."

16. THE GRAZ CATHOLIC KLEINE ZEITUNG (SEPT. 30): "WE ARE ALARMED AND WONDER WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF SOME DAY SOME COUNTRY DEMANDED POLITICAL CONCESSIONS FROM UN, NOT BY TAKING HOSTAGES, BUT BY MILITARY THREATS?"

17. THE GRAZ SOCIALIST NEUE ZEIT (SEPT. 30): "IT WAS NOT ISRAEL'S FOREIGN POLICY, BUT HUMAN LIVES WHICH MATTERED AT SCHWECHAT. THESE LIVES WERE SAVED AT A PRICE WHICH REALLY IS NO PRICE AT ALL: A REFUGEE UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 VIENNA 08090 02 OF 02 011736Z

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CAMP WILL BE CLOSED ... EVEN THE ISRAELIS STATED REPEATEDLY THAT SCHOENAU INVITED ARAB TERRORISTS TO STAGE SO-CALLED COMMANDO ACTIONS. THERE WILL BE NO SUCH INVITATION ANY LONGER, BUT THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT JEWISH EMIGRANTS FROM THE SOVIET UNION CAN NO LONGER STOP OVER IN AUSTRIA. THEY WILL BE ABLE TO DO THIS ALSO IN THE FUTURE - AT LESSER RISK."

18. IN LINZ, INDEPENDENT OBEROESTERREICHISCHE NACHRICHTEN (OCT. 1) CHARGED: "NEVER BEFORE IN THE HISTORY OF MODERN TERRORISM DID A DRAMA WITH HOSTAGES END SO DISGRACEFULLY AS THIS ONE. OUR GOVERNMENT HAS DONE WHAT OTHER GOVERNMENTS CONFRONTING TERRORISTS DID NOT EVEN THINK ABOUT: THE (AUSTRIAN) GOVERNMENT PUT ITSELF ON AN EQUAL FOOTING WITH GANGSTERS AND MADE THEM BARGAINING PARTNERS."

19. A SALZBURG DAILY WITH A NATIONAL CIRCULATION, INDEPENDENT SALZBURGER NACHRICHTEN (OCT. 1) EDITORIALIZED: "THE CLOSING DOWN OF THE CAMP AT SCHOENAU CASTLE DOES NOT PUT AN END TO THE JEWISH EXODUS FROM THE SOVIET UNION ... MOREOVER, A REVISION (OF THE

GOVERNMENT'S DECISION) IS CONCEIVABLE BECAUSE PROMISES MADE UNDER DURESS - AND THE ARAB TERRORISTS WERE CERTAINLY EXTORTIONISTS - ARE NULL AND VOID ... AS FOR THE HEROIC AMERICAN STATEMENT THAT AUSTRIA HAS YEILDED (TO THE TERRORISTS) PRECISELY AT THE TIME WHEN THE UNITED STATES REFUSES THE MOST-FAVORED-NATION TREATMENT TO THE SOVIETS UNLESS THEY PERMIT FREEDOM OF OPINION AND MOVEMENT, THIS IS EASILY SAID. (THE AMERICANS) NEED NOT SHOW THEIR COURAGE WHILE CONFRONTING TERRORISTS WITH HAND GRENADES IN THEIR MOUTHS."

20. THE LINZ SOCIALIST TAGBLATT (OCT. 1): "THOUGH THEY ARE PERSONALLY QUITE HONEST, AMERICAN SENATORS WOULD DO BETTER TO REFRAIN FROM TALKING ABOUT NOT YIELDING TO BLACKMAIL. DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, THEY THEMSELVES ARE BEING EXTORTED AND ORDERED ABOUT BY SHADY ELEMENTS." HUMES

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